

<p style="text-align: center;">London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COMMUNITY SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT AND RESIDENTS' SERVICES POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2nd March 2016</p>	
<p>Services for Violence Against Women and Girls</p>	
<p>Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Cllr Sue Fennimore</p>	
<p>Open Report</p>	
<p>Classification - For Information/For Policy & Accountability</p>	
<p>Key Decision: No</p>	
<p>Wards Affected: All</p>	
<p>Accountable Executive Director: David Page: Director for Safer Neighbourhoods</p>	
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a priority for Hammersmith & Fulham. The responsibility for tackling VAWG spans across most departments in the Council. In July 2015 Hammersmith & Fulham Council partnered the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster City Council, with financial support from MOPAC to commission a joint VAWG Service. The services includes an Integrated Support Service and a Coordination Service. Both services have progressed well since the start of the contract and are meeting agreed targets and delivering an improved response to victims of VAWG.
- 1.2. In addition to the Shared VAWG Service, Hammersmith & Fulham Council has commissioned the Impact Project since 13/14 with funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and Sherpherd's Bush Housing Group. The project improves the criminal justice response to domestic abuse.
- 1.3. Hammersmith & Fulham Council are also involved in a number of Shared Services VAWG pilots including a; Perpetrators Pilot, Harmful Practices Pilot and the H&F Social Care Pilot. The Council also benefits from the Pan London Domestic Violence Service.

2. BACKGROUND

Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls is high on the political and social agenda and continuous improvement in the response to this crime is essential.

Hammersmith and Fulham has a long-standing history of a robust response to domestic abuse. In 2014 the service underwent a move from a focus on domestic abuse to responding to violence against women and girls, encompassing a wider range of issues to tackle the ten strands of VAWG¹.

Hammersmith and Fulham Council, in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council were awarded a sum of money (see table in 3.3) by MOPAC to commission a shared Violence Against Women and Girls Service. The three boroughs commissioned a shared VAWG Integrated Support Service and Coordination Service for the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference MARAC and the two Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs).

The partnership worked in collaboration to develop a VAWG Strategy and a streamlined governance structure consisting of the Shared Services Strategic Board and six operational groups; Children and Health, Housing, Modern Slavery and Exploitation, Risk and Review Group, Specialist Services and Harmful Practices. The three boroughs offer a significant specialist, co-ordinated community response (CCR) to VAWG in partnership with a range of specialist agencies.

In addition to the shared service that available to residents Hammersmith & Fulham also have the Impact Project which has been running since 2013.

3. VAWG SERVICES

3.1. VAWG INTEGRATED SUPPORT SERVICE

3.1.1. Project Summary

The Angelou Partnership consists of nine organisations and brings together the specialisms from across the partnership to deliver a streamlined and holistic approach to tackling issues of violence and abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. The nine organisations have different specialisms and areas of work;

- ADVANCE: Lead organisation for the partnership. Specialists working with women who have experienced domestic abuse
- African Women's Care: Female Genital Mutilation Specialists.
- Women and Girls Network: Engaging and educating younger women
- Woman's Trust: Therapeutic support for women ready to explore & recover from their experiences
- Solace Women's Aid: Holistic & empowering, working alongside survivors to achieve independent lives free from abuse
- Al Hasaniya: Specialists in domestic abuse within Arabic communities
- Hestia: Specialist family work, refuges, and group work.
- Standing Together Against Domestic Violence: An umbrella organisation which supports access to services and awareness raising.

¹ Domestic Violence/Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Violence, Faith Based Abuse, Prostitution and Trafficking, Stalking, Harassment, Sexual Violence and Rape, Sexual Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation.

- Galop: Working with young girls who are LBT who have experienced domestic and sexual violence and abuse.

The VAWG ISS provision enables a true coordinated community response to violence against women and girls, putting survivors at the centre of provision, holding perpetrators to account and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Angelou Partnership provides specific services for BME women and those from the LBT community.

This service expanded the Council’s previous domestic abuse provision to deliver a coordinated specialist support service to victims of VAWG. The core service includes a range of services to support adults and young people, children and families who are victims or affected by gender based violence including but not limited to:

- Women experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence and assault;
- Women experiencing stalking and harassment;
- Women who have been subjected to or at risk of harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage (FM), and honour based violence (HBV);
- Young women and girls aged 13-21 who are experiencing or are at risk of a range of issues including domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, gang related abuse and harmful practices;
- Women with children aged 0-5 and also those with older children;
- Women experiencing intersectional violence (multiple forms of VAWG).

3.1.2. Outcomes and Performance

The Angelou Partnership is monitored on a monthly basis. Each organisation within the partnership has individual targets but the partnership as a whole is measured by the key outcomes included in the table below.

	Outcome	Baseline/ Target	Positive Response
1	Women report increased safety and feelings of safety as measured by exit surveys	65%	92%
2	Women report a reduction in abuse due to support and advice received from service as measured by closing assessments	67%	90%
3	Women are at reduced risk at case closure following the support of the service as measured by professional judgement, risk and needs assessment, and closing statements	62%	89%
4	Women and girls report their quality of life has improved as measured by exit surveys.	55%	83%
5	Women and girls report improved confidence in reporting abuse and/or where to access help and support as measured by exit measured by exit interviews and evaluations.	72%	93%

6	Number of women who have experienced abuse participating in education, training or employment initiatives and/or other personal development opportunities as measured by closing assessments and support plans.	(no baseline – new service)	35%
7	Number of women and young people who report a reduction in social isolation and increased access to social networks.	(no baseline – new service)	74%
8	Young people report increased awareness of various forms of VAWG and where to access help and support as measured by exit interviews and evaluations	(no baseline – new service)	84%
9	Young people report improved confidence in reporting abuse and where to access help and support as measured by exit interviews and evaluations	(no baseline – new service)	100%
10	Improved sexual health awareness as measured by exit interviews and evaluations.	(no baseline -new service)	38%
11	Those engaged in awareness raising and prevention programmes have a greater awareness of VAWG reduced tolerance for VAWG and increased awareness of avenues for support as measures by exit interviews and evaluations.	(no baseline – new service)	64%

As evidenced above Angelou has met and exceeded all of the baseline targets agreed, this quarter, it has also exceeded or met the outcomes achieved by ADVANCE in 2014/15. For the first full quarter of delivery (Q2) there were 974 referrals. This represents a 30% increase from the previous year, and this trend continued into quarter 3. Engagement with the service is strong with 70% new referrals being contacted and 92% of those contacted engaging with the service on an on-going basis.

3.2. VAWG COORDINATION SERVICE

3.2.1. Project Summary

The VAWG Coordination Service is delivered by Standing Together Against Domestic Violence (STADV). The Service includes the coordination of three separate Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC). The role of the MARAC is to facilitate, monitor, and evaluate effective information sharing between statutory and voluntary agencies to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase the safety of high risk victims of domestic violence and their children as well as to assess the risk that the perpetrator poses.

Standing Together are also responsible for the coordination of the criminal justice response across the three boroughs including coordinating the domestic abuse response within the West London and Westminster Magistrates Court and Shared Services Criminal Justice Operational Group. In addition to this the service also includes the coordination of the Shared Services Risk and Review Operational Group.

This provision enables a true coordinated community response to tackling violence against women and girls, putting survivors at the centre of provision, holding perpetrators to account and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

3.2.2. Outcomes and Performance

The Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) in Hammersmith has seen an increase in caseload in Q2 which an average of 11 hearings per SDVC day compared with an average of 9 the previous quarter.

The percentage of defendants convicted in the SDVC and the percentage of defendants who made early guilty pleas also increased.

All outcomes for the Coordination Service were either met or exceeded for Q2 and early returns for Q3 indicate that this has continued.

Performance Indicator	Baseline 2012/13	Achieved 2014/15	Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16
Percentage of defendants convicted at the Domestic Violence Courts in Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster	None set	No target set WCC:63% Ham: 59%	WCC: 63% Ham: 44%	WCC: 72% Ham: 54%	WCC: 81% Ham: 71%
Percentage of defendants who make early guilty pleas at the Domestic Violence Courts in Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster	None set	No target set WCC:35% Ham: 42%	WCC: 32% Ham: 41%	WCC: 43% Ham: 36%	WCC: 42% Ham: 46%

Commissioners are happy with the standard of service being delivered. The volume of referrals for the LBHF MARAC is at 85%. The volume of referrals for LBHF MARAC is now at 85%, in line with best practice (80-100% of the recommended volume).

Three MARACs were held in each borough in Q2, there have been no emergency MARACs. All of the outcomes and targets for this element of the service have been met or exceeded. For Hammersmith & Fulham 100 cases were discussed.

It is believed that an increase in MARAC cases in Hammersmith and Fulham is due to the successes of the co-location of the Impact Project Hammersmith Police Station.

3.3. SHARED SERVICES VAWG FINANCE

Violence Against Women and Girls is a priority issue that crosses a number of departments across the Council. The expertise and funding for this service comes from several departments across the three boroughs as well as funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

	Y1 Totals	Y2 Totals	Total
MOPAC	£63,750	£85,000	£148,750
COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT	£22,500	£30,000	£52,500
LBHF CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£9,600	£12,800	£22,400
LBHF ADULT SOCIAL CARE	£9,600	£12,800	£22,400
THIRD SECTOR INVESTMENT FUND	£93,708	£124,944	£218,652
LBHF ADULT SOCIAL CARE - SUPPORTING PEOPLE	£48,750	£65,000	£113,750
SUB TOTAL	£231,302	£308,403	£539,705

Currently, MOPAC and the above departments have committed to contributing funding towards VAWG service until end of 16/17.

3.4. IMPACT

3.4.1. Project Summary

The Impact Project aims to improve the criminal justice response to domestic abuse in Hammersmith & Fulham. It seeks to strengthen integrated working between partner agencies with the aim of improving outcomes for victims and their families. Impact is a unique project only running in Hammersmith & Fulham.

The project team brings together the expertise and work of the Metropolitan Police, CPS, NPS, the local authority, Hammersmith Magistrates Court and third sector organisations including; Shepherds Bush Housing Group, Advance, and Standing Together. The partners range across the public, private and voluntary sector to coordinate an effective response.

The project aims to understand the nature of attrition and develop solutions where improvements can be made. Collaborative working minimises delays in a case creating better outcomes for victims. Delays can lead to victims and witnesses becoming reluctant to engage with the criminal justice system at all.

The project team is a collaboration of three third sector organisations; Shepherds Bush Housing Group, Standing Together, and Advance, with funding from MOPAC and Shepherd's Bush Housing Group.

The Impact Team:

- Project Manager/Legal Advisor (SBHG): The Impact Project Manager has overall responsibility for coordinating and managing 'Impact'. The project manager also has a practical day-to-day role which involves working closely with the partners around legal matters and advice, case preparation, promoting thorough investigations, and keeping the Impact project relevant and useful to all partners.
- 1.5 Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (Advance): The criminal Justice Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) supports victims of domestic abuse going through the criminal justice system through practical and emotional support and provision of options.
- Part Time Case Development Analyst (Standing Together): The Case Development Analyst has overall responsibility for proactively tracking cases through the criminal justice system from first arrest to final outcome, whatever the disposal may be. The

case development analyst also works for Standing Together as the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court co-ordinator, so she has a unique overview of the cases from arrest through to sentence.

3.4.2. Outcomes and Performance

The Impact Project is set up to achieve three overarching outcomes which have been included in the agreements with all partners as the below Workstreams:

Workstream 1:

Reduce the risk posed by perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Workstream 2:

Increase victim confidence in the criminal justice response to Domestic Abuse

Workstream 3:

Hold perpetrators to account.

Workstream 1	2012-13 Baseline	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Forecast
Offences	1,150	1,169	1,368	1,604
% of Sanction Detections that result in a charge	57%	55.4%	54.8%	61.1%
% of DV cases that result in a conviction	59%	68%	74%	71.5%

The number of offences is progressively increasing which indicates that reporting is increasing and therefore suggests the confidence in the criminal justice system is improving for victims of domestic violence.

The percentage of charges continues to increase as a result of the Impact team working with community safety unit (CSU) officers to ensure that cases are thoroughly prepared for charge. The number of convictions has steadily increased since the start of the project. There has been a slight decline this year from 14/15, there are external factors which may account for this such as a decline in the number of prosecutors in the CPS domestic violence unit meaning that each prosecutor's caseload has increased. It may also be, in part, attributed to the make-up of the CSU. Throughout 2015, there was a relatively settled team, with significant experience between them. Around about September 2015, changes were implemented where experienced officers were being moved out of the CSU and new, less experienced officers were brought in to replace them. Although the Impact team provides training and support to all new officers who have arrived into the CSU in 15/16, given the high number of changes to the unit, the team needs to settle in and develop skills and learn numerous processes, which are unique to the CSU.

Workstream 2	2012-13 Baseline	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Forecast
Unsuccessful cases	63	68	46	66
% unsuccessful cases due to victims or witnesses reasons (evidential)	71	65	57	58
% offences not resulting in a Sanction Detection	50.1%	56.0%	61.5%	71.3%
Number victims engaged with criminal justice IDVA	178	247	111	81
Number of DV cases that result in a conviction	92	144	133	153

The Impact Project continues to work with response and community safety officers to strengthen the standard of cases so that outcomes remain positive even when the victim withdraws or refuses to give evidence. Therefore the percentage of cases that are unsuccessful due to the victim or witness evidential reasons decreased from the start of the project.

The percentage of offences not resulting in a sanction detection has increased, however, this should be considered in tandem with the increase in the convictions rate. It indicates that the cases that are being charged, although fewer, are evidentially stronger, thus resulting in a conviction. Furthermore, of the new referrals to the criminal justice IDVA, 91% of those contacted, engaged with the service. The result being that if they are supported they will remain in the process, which drives up the conviction rate. The Impact team continues to work with the CSU officers to help them prepare strong cases to put up for charge but also welcomes the increase in the conviction rate.

CSU officers do comment that there often occasions when the CPS want to bail the suspect rather than charge. The CPS does not tend to have a uniform approach as to bail or charge. Officers often report to Impact that they have enough evidence to charge but the CPS may decide to bail and ask for withdrawal statements in cases where there is a reluctant witness, instead of charging and advising that a witness summons should be applied for. What tends to follow is that the witness will feel despondent that the case was not charged and will withdraw their support.

Workstream 3	2012-13 Baseline	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Forecast
% of Sanction Detections that result in a charge	57%	55.4%	54.8%	61.1%
% victims who report feeling safer following engagement with CJS IDVA	69.1%	64.4%	91.1%	84.1%
% victims engaged with CJS IDVA at reduced risk of further harm.	79.8%	77.3%	82.0%	85.4%

The percentage of victims reporting feeling safer following engagement with the Criminal Justice System (CJS) IDVA is on an upward trend in comparison with the baseline data (pre-

Impact project figures) despite a small decrease since 2014-15. There could be a number of reasons for the slight decrease, one of which is that victims often report feeling different levels of safety throughout the criminal justice process, depending on whether the case had a positive outcome or not. For example, if the case did result in a conviction but the court did not grant a restraining order, the victim may feel less safe until a civil remedy such as a non-molestation order is in place. Another example as to why a victim may not feel safe is that the question may have been asked directly following a positive outcome, but it may take them a while to believe that they really are safe. The higher percentage of 91.1% of victims feeling safer in 2014/15 may also have been as a result of the CJ IDVA closing more cases than usual. The percentage of victims who report feeling at reduced risk following engagement with the CJS IDVA is continuing to increase.

In February 2016, the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court was successful in obtaining the first ever European Protection Order (EPO) issued in England and Wales in one of Hammersmith and Fulham's domestic abuse cases. The legislation around EPOs came into force in January 2015, it means that bail conditions, or conditions of a restraining order, can travel with the victim therefore affording them protection in a specified EU member state. This involved the Impact project working closely with the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate, the officer in the case, and the CPS and is a fantastic example of coordinated partnership working.

3.4.3. Finance

The Impact Project is funded as part of the London Crime Prevention Fund through the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. The project commenced in April 2013 and will continue under the current contract until March 2017. MOPAC provide £90,100 funding for the project and Shepherd's Bush Housing Group provide £98,000.

3.5. OTHER VAWG PROJECTS

In addition to these key services delivered in the borough, there are some smaller projects to offer a more holistic response to Violence Against Women and Girls. These projects tie in with the Shared Services VAWG Strategy.

3.5.1. Partnership to End Harmful Practices (PEHP)

Harmful Practices includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage (FM), Honour Based Violence (HBV) and Faith Based Abuse (FBA). The PEHP delivers the Harmful Practices Pilot and the FGM Pilot. The partnership, led by the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation, delivers services across Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster, and is funded by MOPAC and the Department for Education.

The Harmful Practices Pilot

The Harmful Practices Pilot aims to improve the way health, education, the voluntary sector and criminal justice agencies identify and respond to harmful practices. The key overarching aims of the project are early identification and prevention, safeguarding and support, enforcement and prosecutions and community engagement.

There are two key elements to the pilot. Firstly, two comprehensive harmful practices training packages, and secondly, a specialist harmful practices advocacy/educator service. These elements will be supported by community engagement activity.

The FGM Pilot

In December the DfE announced that MOPAC had been successful in gaining an award from the Social Care Innovation Programme funding . This bid sought to enable an enhanced pilot model, building on the initial provision provided by Deputy Mayor For Policing and Crime. It is intended to supplement a specific workstream to address FGM through additionally targeted at health care professionals and borough-based social care teams.

The aim of this activity is to proactively prevent girls from being cut. The children at greatest risk are the female children of FGM victims; the starting point for this innovation is therefore identification of adult victims of FGM through a joint approach between midwifery and social care services, in order to offer timely and proactive intervention.

The key overarching themes of the bid;

- Girls at risk are identified pre-birth through proactive information sharing between Maternity Services and Social Care
- Referrals leading to timely and effective intervention with mothers who are FGM victims and their families, led by social care in partnership with appropriate community organisations
- Work with identified families leading to them choosing not to subject their daughters to FGM.

3.5.2. Perpetrator Pilot

The Perpetrator Pilot aims to increase the identification of, and interventions with, perpetrators of domestic abuse across the three boroughs. The pilot is funded by MOPAC through the London Crime Prevention Fund until March 2016.

Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) is delivering the pilot. The first two months of the pilot have been used for mobilisation and staff recruitment. DVIP has hired additional staff (two full time posts and one 0.8 post) to work across three distinct areas of tackling perpetrators: Criminal Justice Provision, Family Support and Young People.

The criminal justice worker has begun delivering briefings and training to police officers and is due to start taking referrals in February 2016. The worker will also contribute to the Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPPs) delivery group across the three boroughs.

The two family support workers are based in RBKC, they will liaise with other Domestic Violence Intervention Programme (DVIP) workers in Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster who are funded through other projects to share best practice and learning.

Two part time support workers for young people will be co-located in the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and work with young people aged 11-18 as well as parents. This provision will support at least 30 families across the shared services area including one-to-one sessions, group work, and supporting cases with link to Child Sexual Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence. Referrals have already begun.

In the next quarter, DVIP will continue to deliver briefings and presentations to raise awareness of the pilot and will begin taking referrals across all three delivery locations. The first outcome data will be provided in the next quarter.

3.5.3. H&F Social Care Pilot

The Hammersmith & Fulham Social Care Pilot is a partnership project between H&F Social Care, Standing Together, Advance, and Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP). It aims to provide co-located specialist support in both Child Protection and Early Help services so that social care practitioners have on site access to support their work with families where domestic abuse is an issue. It will also provide an enhanced risk and need-focused service keeping children and survivors safe, holding perpetrators to account and providing them with support to change.

The project includes 1.5 IDVAs and a Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) worker is co-located in Early Help in LBHF children's services. This pilot began in September 2015 for two years and is delivered jointly by DVIP and Advance, with coordination by Standing Together. The team delivers assessment and direct work separately with perpetrators and survivors and also trains and supports children's services professionals to respond more effectively and consistently to cases where domestic abuse is present.

3.5.4. Pan-London DV Service

MOPAC commissioned Victim Support to run a Pan-London Domestic Violence service and mobilisation began in April 2015. As part of this, the three boroughs were allocated one full time IDVA post, a full time DV repeat victimisation caseworker and 1.5 DV caseworkers who can support medium and standard risk cases.

Referrals to the 2.5 DV caseworkers began slower than anticipated. A meeting was held in January with Advance to develop stronger referral pathways between and to Victim Support and Angelou to address capacity issues and ensure that all DV resources available in the Shared Services area are being utilised in the most effective way and cases are allocated according to the appropriate risk levels. effectively.

4. RISKS AND ISSUES

The funding for both the VAWG Services and for Impact is due to cease at the end of financial year 16/17. As both services are funded through the London Crime Prevention Fund there is a risk that the funding will not be available after the existing contracts finish. It is not possible to confirm that the LCPF will continue as a funding stream, and even if the fund continues, whether the projects will continue to be funded as part of the scheme.

In addition to this, there will be a new Mayor following the May 2016 London Mayoral elections. Currently, we do not know whether VAWG will remain a priority.

The success of the Impact project is, in part, due to the co-location of the Impact team in the Hammersmith Police Station near to the Community Safety Unit. However, the Police Station is due to undergo a refurbishment, it has not yet been confirmed where the CSU will be moving to during this time and whether there will be additional suitable provision for the Impact team.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Members are asked to consider the weight and importance of these services. The effects of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls often go unnoticed by many, these issues need specific and tailored support from specialist professionals.